

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are pending. Claims 1, 11, 15, 16, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b). Claims 1-7, 11, 12, 15-21, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Claims 8-10, 13, 14, 22-25, 27, and 28 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 1-7, 11-21, and 25-28 are cancelled herein without prejudice and will be pursued in a continuation application. Claims 8-10 and 22-24 remain for consideration in the present application.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claims 8-10, 13, 14, 22-25, 27, and 28 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten claims 8, 9, 22, and 23 in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claims from which they depend and any intervening claims. Claim 10 remains dependent upon claim 9 and is therefore allowable, and claim 24 remains dependent upon claim 23 and is therefore also allowable. In accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowability, Applicant's respectfully assert that claims 8-10 and 22-24 are allowable and respectfully request that the Examiner pass these claims to issue.

Claims 1, 11, 15, 16, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 1,920,711 to Pelizzola (hereinafter referred to as the '711 patent).

Claims 1, 11, 15, 16, and 25 are cancelled without prejudice, as indicated above, and will be pursued in a continuation application. Accordingly, the rejections thereof under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the '711 patent are moot.

Claims 1, 2, 11, 15, 16, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,689,883 to Ortiz et al. (hereinafter referred to as the '883 patent) in view of the '711 patent.

Claims 1, 2, 11, 15, 16, and 25 are cancelled without prejudice, as indicated above, and will be pursued in a continuation application. Accordingly, the rejections thereof under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the '883 patent in view of the '711 patent are moot.

Claims 1, 3-7, 11, 15-21, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent Publication No. 2003/0143832 to Guimont (hereinafter referred to as the '832 reference) in view of the '711 patent.

Claims 1, 3-7, 11, 15-21, and 25 are cancelled without prejudice, as indicated above, and will be pursued in a continuation application. Accordingly, the rejections thereof under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the '832 reference in view of the '711 patent are moot.

Claims 1, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent Number 5,402,574 to Milner (hereinafter referred to as the '574 patent) in view of the '711 patent.

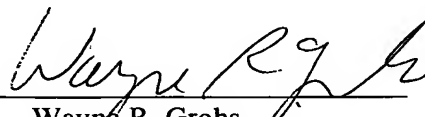
Claims 1, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21, and 26 are cancelled without prejudice, as indicated above, and will be pursued in a continuation application. Accordingly, the rejections thereof under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the '574 patent in view of the '711 patent are moot.

Applicants believe that the foregoing amendments and remarks are fully responsive to the Office Action and that the claims herein are allowable. In view of the foregoing points, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider the present application, remove the rejections, and allow the remaining claims not cancelled in the application to issue.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned.

A check in the amount of \$320.00 is enclosed for the one-month extension fee and for the extra independent claim. If any additional charges are incurred with respect to this Amendment, they may be charged to Deposit Account No. 503342 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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